# POEMS

JAMES GARDNER

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# POEMS

# *The Captive's Address to Fancy and Other Poems*

BY

JAMES GARDNER

*Tam corde quam manu*

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TO MY SISTERS

MARION AND ELIZABETH

THIS BOOK IS

LOVINGLY DEDICATED

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# POEMS

## THE CAPTIVE'S ADDRESS TO FANCY.

SPREAD out thy wings, my Fancy, O wild bird, blythe and gay,
Spread out thy strong swift pinions and speed thee on thy way.
Far from the gleaming heavens Night's curtain is unrolled,
And rosy tides of morning are flooding hill and wold.
Untramelled thou may'st wander, nor will I call thee home,
Though o'er the world forever thy restless wings may roam.
Though I am held in fetters and base captivity,
O Fancy, chainless Fancy, thy wings are always free.
As free as proudest eagle that soars the heavens wide;
As free as streamlet dashing from down the mountain's side;
As free as wildest charger that roams the desert plain;

As free as seagull skimming the restless raging main;

As free as storm clouds drifting across the winter sky;

As free as winds of summer that in the forests sigh.

Then why should'st thou be drooping, or in a prison pine

When land and sky and ocean and all the world are thine?

From lands of palm and spices and splendid scenes of bliss,

Where Nature burns and blushes 'neath fierce Equator's kiss;

Where in the lap of ocean are spread the tropic isles,

Whose coral strands are gilded by summer's constant smiles;

To where in frozen splendor the cruel Arctic reigns;

Where frown the spectral glaciers and stretch the icy plains;

O thou at will may journey—in any zone may dwell—
Can soar to highest heaven or dive to deepest hell.
No bonds can hold thee captive, no prison's gloomy night;
No granite walls, no shackles can curb thy daring flight.
So spread thy regal pinions and leave me to my gloom;
Thou need'st not share my bondage, my dungeon or my doom.

## ST. HELENA.

O LONELY island, thou art but a scrap
Of the creation that convulsions past,
With careless hands all aimlessly hath cast
Into the surging ocean's mighty lap.
Thy naked feet the restless billows wrap
In snowy vestments. Thy lone form is glassed
In the huge mirror of the waters vast,
Though but a speck upon the world's great map.

Yet, once upon thy barren strand the glance
Of each great nation of the world was bent,
For on thy shores, by nature all unblessed;
The great Napoleon, pride of vanquished France,
Was like a caged lion basely pent
To end his days thy exiled, captive-guest.

## SAHARA.

THOU art lone and drear, Sahara, and by some unkind mishap
Nature has not cast a blossom in thy arid, barren lap.
Spring will visit other regions, and her steps on hill and wold
Will awake the seeds that slumber underneath the fertile mold.
But to thee she brings no frondage, and thy naked wilds complain
To the lurid skies that grant them not a drop of cooling rain.
But, although thy plains are springless, and with no gay frondage dressed,
I, who yearn for calm and quiet, do not deem thee all unblessed;
For thy very desolation shields thy parched and burning sands
From the turmoil and the troubles that afflict more favored lands.
Thus when my impatient spirit struggles in its hopeless strife

With the galling chains that bind it to the hard demands of life;

When hope's skies are draped in shadow and misfortune's winds blow chill,

And endeavor's bare feet falter on ambition's rugged hill;

I would flee, O drear Sahara, to thy calm and peaceful arms,

As a vessel seeks a haven from the tempest's wild alarms;

And upon some green oasis that thy desert sands enfold,

Like an emerald embedded in a band of shining gold,

I would build my humble dwelling, fenced by wilds all lone and bare,

Where the harsh-toned voice of traffic has not roused the demon care;

And within thy walls of silence I would find a sweet surcease

From the pains that poison pleasure, and the trials that murder peace.

I would be as free, Sahara, from the cares that
scourge me now,
As the eagle soaring o'er thee, and the breeze
that fans thy brow.

## THE SADDEST THINGS.

THE bud that from its birth was doomed
To wither ere its beauty bloomed.

The seed that ne'er from slumber woke,
Or through the closing furrow broke.

The broken shaft that marks the head
Of some young life too early fled.

The riven links of love's bright chain
That only God can mend again.

The tears we shed for some dear friend
When broken faith the bond must end.

The heart, which, though it aches the while,
Conceals its pain behind a smile.

## MILLIONAIRE AND PAUPER.

THOUGH different in fortunes as the night
and the day,
Alike were they molded by God out of clay.

Whatever their station, they equally share
The love of the Being whose image they bear.

Unequal yet equal, by weakness allied
The one Fortune favored, and the one she denied.

The chasm which one from the other divides
Is bridged by a kinship that circumstance hides.

Both own the emotions that wantonly play
On the chords of the heart the very same way;

And passions that breed only sins for their heirs
In the bosoms of both have made their dark lairs;

While Virtue, that tender exotic, may grow
Alike in the breasts of the high and the low.

The puppets of chance, both the humble and
great,
They move by a string that is handled by Fate.

The playthings of impulse and slaves of desires,
Their bosoms are scorched with unquenchable fires.

The dupes of illusions, alike they pursue
The mirages that charm ere they fade from the view.

Alike do they suffer disappointment's eclipse;
Grief holds the same bitter draught to their lips;

Care burdens them both with a wearisome pack;
Pain stretches them both on the same cruel rack;

Chance brings them alike its proportion of ruth;
Time robs them alike of the treasures of youth;

And Age treading slowly the pathway of years,
As surely to one as the other appears;

And neither the one nor the other will spare,
But furrows the forehead and silvers the hair.

And when in the dark lonely grave they are thrust,
They both are the same—but a handful of dust.

# BELISARIOUS.

Belisarious, who as a military genius deserves to rank with Hannibal, was the greatest general of the Byzantine empire, and Justinian owed much of the glory of his reign to the conquests of this remarkable warrior. It is stated that, in his old age, blind and in rags, he begged alms on the very streets through which had once been borne the trophies of his victories.

ALAS, how fallen I am now;
I once was honored in the land,
And wore the laurels on my brow
Bestowed by grateful ruler's hand.

Yes, I, who once, a monarch's guest,
Reposed in princely palace halls
Now lay my aged limbs to rest
Within a squalid hovel's walls.

The honey of a king's applause
Once filled with joy these very ears,
Which now the vilest wretch may cause
To tingle with his taunting jeers.

This voice that mighty armies made
The servants of its every tone—

This voice that vanquished hosts obeyed,
And dared to dictate to a throne;

Has now an humble suppliant turned
Within its own dear native land,
And that degrading lesson learned
To sue where once it did command.

These hands that once o'er fields of sand
Guided the war-horse to the fight;
And made the victor's flashing brand
The scepter of an army's might;

Have laid the battle sword away,
And now stretch forth their war-worn palms,
So that the scornful passer may
Insult them with his paltry alms.

Is this, Justinian, then the meed,
The guerdon of great battles won,
That through the clouds of woe and need
I see descend life's setting sun?

My lance pinned to thy empire's map
A nation won by bloody toils,

And poured into thy realm's great lap
The treasures of a victor's spoils.

It needs no tongue with loud acclaim
To tell the story of my wars,
For on this bent and withered frame
The sword has written it in scars.

## LESSONS.

O BEE that dost so swiftly roam
O'er flowery mead and fragrant bower,
And beareth to thy waxen home
The tribute of each generous flower;
No moment dost thou waste, for well
Thou knowest that the time is brief
Ere in the arms of vale and dell
Shall fade each bloom and verdant leaf.
Industrious bee, well would it be
If some a lesson learned from thee.

O patient camel, doomed to fare
O'er dreary wastes of desert lands;
Oft forced by tyrant man to bear
Hard burdens o'er the scorching sands;
Though pain attends each weary league,
And endless seems the burning track;
Thou bearest still, despite fatigue,
Without complaint thy heavy pack.
O patient beast, well would it be
If some a lesson learned from thee.

O hound, more loyal far than he
Who thrice the Nazarene denied;
Unshaken thy fidelity,
Although all others turn aside;
Though troubles round thy master flock
Like hungry wolves about their prey;
Though at his door grim want may knock,
But never dost thou turn away.
O faithful dog, well would it be
If some a lesson learned from thee.

# ERE THIS NEW YEAR HAS ENDED.

## 1910

ERE this new year has ended
That promises so fair,
How strangely will be blended
Bright pleasures with despair,
How many hopes we cherish
Will wither ere they bloom,
And leave us when they perish
To disappointment's gloom.

How many ties be broken
That only God can mend;
How many farewells spoken,
How many friendships end.
How many troths be plighted
Beneath hope's cloudless skies;
How many hearts united
In love's enduring ties.

How many children tender
On life's hard road will start,

With eager hands to render
Each one his little part.
How many lives will waken
To greet a bright morn,
And have life's sandals taken
From feet all travel-worn.

Ere this new year has ended,
And o'er its scenes at last
The curtain has descended
That links it to the past;
How many things will happen,
What strange events transpire;
What storms on land and ocean,
What plagues and famines dire.

Will War call forth his legions,
And loud his tocsin ring,
And at the feet of nations
The gage of battle fling?
Or will Peace hold in bondage
The hostile nations all,
And drown with her paeans
The martial bugle's call?

We know not, nay, we know not,
  Wise scholar, sage, and king,
The strange, the mighty changes
  A fleeting day may bring;
For mystic and uncertain
  The unknown future lies
Behind Time's jealous curtain
  That hides it from our eyes.

## LINES TO A MOUNTAIN.

IN lonely grandeur thou dost rise,
Piercing the smoke-wreath's misty shrouds,
Thy forehead in the shining skies
Above the path of roaming clouds.

At break of morn the king of day
With his first kiss salutes thy cheek;
At eve his last expiring ray
Falls lightly on thy lofty peak.

Deep silence wraps thee. Solitude
Reigns there supreme. All safe from harm
The eagle rears his dusky brood
Beneath the shelter of thy arm.

No foot essays thy turrets steep;
Thy summit grim no path provides;
Scarce can the nimble mountain sheep
Find foothold on the sloping sides.

Low at thy feet spring from her loom,
So prodigal to gentle leas,
Has robed the valleys deep in bloom,
Made garments gay for all the trees.

For thee alone no garb she'll find,
By gorgeous frondage all unblessed,
She leaves thee naked to each wind
That roves about thy barren crest.

Yes, thou art nude, and only thou,
Thy very head uncrowned and bare,
Till pitying snows have sought thy brow,
And bound a spotless turban there.

## TO A SOCIETY WOMAN.

YOU call yourself queen of the fashion,
Your kingdom is Vanity Fair;
Your court is the gay crowded ball-room;
Your throne is the tete-a-tete chair.

Your mirror your sagest adviser;
Your subjects are puppets of style;
Your laws are your whims and caprices;
Your creed the religion of guile.

The squadrons composing your army
Are useless to fight and to kill;
Their battlefield only a parlor,
Their tactics, the waltz and quadrille.

To love in your kingdom is treason,
A crime, lo, the darkest in hue;
And sentiment dies on the scaffold,
If once he but dares to be true.

To feel is a sin without pardon,
To blush is a habit unknown;
Poverty is punished with exile,
It's a fault you never condone.

And such are your manners and customs,
No immigrant ever so bold
Would venture to enter your regions
Unarmed with a passport of gold.

## MISFITS.

OLD Destiny, life's architect, oft draws his plans so ill
That many a one is doomed to miss the niche he ought to fill;
And from the humblest cottage to the palace and the court
He makes of every human life his plaything and his sport.
He chains a poet to the forge, an artist to the plow,
And gives a sage a clown's high cap to wear upon his brow.
He makes a voice that nature meant to ring in senate halls,
Urge stubborn teams to draw the cart with loud and angry calls.
He puts the reins of state in hands designed to drive a dray,
And gives a shepherd's crook to one who should a sceptre sway.
He makes a warrior don a cowl, and in the cloister kneel,

And sends a priest off to the wars clad in a coat of steel.
He sends home-loving feet to rove on weary pilgrimage,
And holds a captive one who thinks his home is but a cage.
The strong oft get the smallest loads, the weak the largest packs;
A giant often plies a pen, a dwarf the ponderous axe.

And such the woof and warp of life this wizard often knits
That all the world where'er we turn seems filled with strange misfits.

## LINES TO A SEA SHELL.

I LISTEN to thee, lovely shell;
Though parted from thy native shore,
I still within thy pearly cell
Can hear a mimic ocean roar.

And must a voice within thee dwell
That will not hush or cease complain,
But still must mock the billow's swell,
And tell of depths where thou hast lain?

Must memory in thy bosom keep
The sleepless whisper of regret,
That still must tell thee of the deep,
Nor let thee of thy loss forget?

Must coral caves and grottos bright
Still woo thee to their hidden bliss?
Must thou still mourn the sweet delight
That lived in every billow's kiss?

How like thy whispered, soft complaint
This voice that in my bosom dwells,
Whose plaintive music, low and faint,
Of long lost joys so sadly tells.

## THOU AND I.

THY life is like a pleasure bark
That cruises near a sunny shore,
And when the sky with storm is dark
In some calm haven rests secure.

But mine is like a shattered boat
Adrift on stormy waters cast;
Tossed by the waves, yet doomed to float,
But finds no place to rest at last.

## ESTRANGED.

NO pathless ocean deep and wide
Between them lies; they meet
Each day, walk side by side
Along the same crowd-cumbered street.

And though the homes in which they dwell
Lie in the selfsame crowded mart,
Were she in heaven, he in hell,
They would not be more far apart.

# WHY NELLIE GOES NO MORE TO SCHOOL.

A PLEASANT pathway lies between
My cottage and a lonely moor—
A byway fenced by hedges green
That line its length and shade it o'er;
And near it fringed with flowers sweet,
There lies a limpid, laughing pool;
'Twas there last year I used to meet
Sweet Nellie on her way to school.

That year has passed. The springtime weaves
A mantle just as bright and gay;
The sunshine sifting through the leaves
Makes pictures on that quiet way.
She came no more, I knew not why;
I saw the summer season wane,
But never more could I descry
Her small feet tripping down the lane.

The year grew old; a sober hue
Crept over meadow, hill and wold;
And Autumn o'er the woodlands threw
His robe of crimson, brown and gold;

When passing by a churchyard lone,
Where winds were sighing soft and cool,
I read in words carved on a stone
Why Nellie goes no more to school.

## A PAIR OF OLD SHOES.

THEY are useless and wholly discarded—
These shoes that some little girl wore;
Cast aside, as rubbish regarded,
Their journeys forevermore o'er.
Old Time has laid wantonly o'er them
The coat of his mildews and mold;
We know not who owned them or wore them—
Their story will never be told.

Did they move with unwilling paces
Each day on their journey to school,
And loiter in cool shady places,
Defying the teacher's strict rule?
Did they tread with soft, noiseless tipping
The floor in a sick-room's deep gloom
Before they went merrily skipping
O'er meadows with flowers abloom?

Did they join the gay whirling dancers,
And glide in the wildest delight
Through quadrilles and waltzes and lancers
In the glow of chandeliers bright?

Did they speed with steps ready and willing—
Steps lithesome and airy and fleet—
In eagerness gladly fulfilling
Some mission of charity sweet?

Perhaps the small feet that were hidden
Within them, so dainty and slight,
Have by the kind angels been bidden
To roam in fair gardens of light;
And there where the soft, balmy weather
Grows never dark, stormy nor cold,
These little shoes fashioned of leather
Were changed for bright sandals of gold.

## TO THE WIND.

WITHIN the arms of continents the ocean frets in vain,
Striving to shake the empires' clutch from his imperial mane;

But thou, bold rover of the world, in thy resistless might,
Wilt brook no fetters to thy will, no barriers to thy flight.

Oh, thou mayst dwell in any zone—mayst rove in any clime,
From India's spicy valleys to the Alpine heights sublime—

Mayst fan Sahara's burning brow, then from the desert drear
Speed on to sound thy trumpet's blast in grim old Arctic's ear—

Mayst lift the veil of mist that hides the mountain's frozen peak,
And then descend in thy rough sport to smite old ocean's cheek;

Till the insulted main rebels, and pouts in awful wrath;
While angry billows dance in rage where thou hast made thy path.

On thunder's tongue thy voice proclaims the cyclone and the gale,
And on thy wings the tempest rides that bids the forest quail.

Though thou dost lend thy strength to man to waft across the wave
His fragile bark, he cannot boast that thou wert e'er his slave.

But fetterless and unconfined, thou speedest on thy way,
As free as when God bid thee rove upon the primal day.

## HER LETTERS.

I'LL burn her dainty letters,
Yes, every precious sheet,
For time has loosed the fetters
That held me at her feet—
Each tender tie is broken,
The dream is o'er at last;
I will not keep one token
That links me to the past.

They're chapters of a story
Of love's delightful lore,
Whose pages now grown hoary,
I care to read no more,
The little play is over,
Its acts we'll not recall,
And though I fondly love her,
We'll let the curtain fall.

Yet how my fancy lingers,
In fond regret confessed,
O'er pages where her fingers
So lovingly have pressed.

Ah, me, the sweet emotion
That thrills through every line
That tells the dear devotion
Her heart once had for mine.

Yes, burn them, let them perish—
That love is out of date;
It's folly now to cherish
The vows that they relate.
Alas, it would be better
If memory, too, could burn,
And with each old love letter
To lifeless ashes turn.

# WILD BIRDS.

I CANNOT keep my thoughts at home,
Those wanton wild birds will not stay
Within their cage, but ever roam
With bold ambitious flight away.

Oft to the mist-enshrouded past
The swift rebellious vagrants rove,
And cross its seas, gloom-draped and vast,
To perch in memory's tangled grove.

Oft-times with pinions strong and fleet,
They dare the future's mystic clime,
Until with weary wings they beat
Against the prison bars of time.

And when sleep weaves his fairy chain,
And weary limbs in bondage lie,
They leave their perches in the brain
To soar in dream's enchanted sky.

## HOPE.

FROM the springtime of our childhood to
the winter of old age,
With the hosts of care and trouble every day we
all must cope;
And so long as we have parts to play upon life's
tragic stage,
Our spirits are uplifted by the sweet sustainer,
hope.

In the fleeting days of pleasure, in the lagging
days of woe;
In the sunshine of our triumphs, in the gloom of
dire defeat;
She allures us, and we follow, ay, we ever on-
ward go,
Though our burdens seem too heavy and the
thorns have pierced our feet.

Though we rest in pleasure's valley, though we
scale the mounts of care;
Though we feast in rich prosperity, or starve on
famine's crust;

Though we dress in costly raiment, or the beggar's tatters wear,
We pursue her lovely visions till the body turns to dust.

In each human habitation; in the cloister, in the marts,
In the palace of the monarch; in the hovel of the slave;
She's a guest that ever lingers, and she cheers all human hearts,
Though they beat within the bosom of the craven or the brave.

## TO VICTORINE.

DO not deem me all unfeeling,
Though my face is stern and cold;
It is not by outward seeming
That the mind's deep thoughts are told.

Feelings and the mask that hides them
Stand forever far apart,
And the face is not the index
To the secrets of the heart.

Underneath pride's frozen surface
Passion's fires still burn and glow,
Just as flames scorch Hecla's bosom,
Though its form is clad in snow.

## EARLY MORNING NAPS.

IT is very well in winter, when the skies are
dark and drear,
And the wind makes mournful music in the forest
bleak and sere,
To be lulled in early morning by the rain-drops'
soft refrain,
As they beat with gentle cadence on your dark-
ened window-pane.

But when winter is all over, and the only hint of
snow
Is the dogwood's blossoms scattered by the
breezes to and fro;
It would seem to me a reckless disregard of na-
ture's gifts
Should I sleep a single moment when the night's
dark curtain lifts.

To the night I give my slumbers, for I think it
is his due,
And I float on dream's bright billows all the lone
dark hours through;

Oh, but when the dawn is breaking, I elude sleep's
artful trap,
When he seeks to snare my senses in a slothful
morning nap.

It is not a time for slumber when the young day's
urn of gold
Spills a ceaseless stream of lustre over drowsy
hill and wold;
So I seek divorce from blankets when a bright
spring day is born,
And the world pins on its bosom the fair blossom
of the morn.

## TO A DESERT.

REPINE not at thy hapless lot,
O naked waste of scorching sands,
Nor deem it all unmeet that not
A wreath is thine from nature's hands;
For though no garlands o'er thee twine,
A perfect calm and peace are thine.

Full many a wreath-crowned sister land
Of vineclad hill and flowery wold,
To whose gay dress the wave-kissed strand
Is as a fringe of shining gold,
Is often torn by conflicts dire,
And swept by battle's blighting fire.

But grim and all-destroying War,
Who smites the climes with roses decked,
Upon thy plains hath left no scar
To tell the tale of nations wrecked;
Thy sands the red and awful draught
Of human gore hath never quaffed.

Gaunt Famine's children often fare
Where fields are rich with ripening grain,

But never seek thy wilds, nor dare
Invade thy barren, dread domain;
The taintless winds that o'er thee blow
Bear not a groan of human woe.

Where plenty reigns, Vice thrives the best,
And foul Disease's festering brood,
In lands with flowery mantles dressed,
Roves free o'er many a verdant rood;
But Pestilence and Sin ne'er roam
To thy lone sands to find a home.

Thus, though denied the sparkling rills,
The gorgeous blooms and frondage gay;
Thou still art spared life's countless ills,
And shielded from man's bitter fray;
Thou art, indeed, a region which
Sterility hath made most rich.

## WE NEVER CAN TURN BACK.

FROM happy youth to sere old age life's
rugged way we wend,
The cradle is the starting place, the lonely
grave the end;
Yet this is true, through all the years whate'er
we gain or lack,
It matters not how long the way, we never can
turn back.

Like mirage on the desert sands, hope lures us
on, we fare
With eager feet o'er pleasure's vale and dreary
miles of care;
Yet this we know, though joy may light or grief
make dark the track,
Our feet can tread it only once—we never can
turn back.

Turn back, who would relive one day—bid time
his steps retrace—
Reverse the shadow that is cast across the
dial's face?

We who have writhed, in days gone by, upon
grief's cruel rack,
Are thankful that upon life's path we never
can turn back.

## DUST FROM HEAVEN.

YEARS ago in winter time
When the snow's white mantle fell,
And you heard the merry chime
Of the sleigher's tuneful bell—
When the fields and meadows lay
White beneath the leaden skies,
That old nurse of mine would say—
And I thought her then so wise,
That without a single doubt
I would take her sayings all,
"Chile dey's sweepin heaben out
When you see dem snowflakes fall."

I have laid my childhood by
Like a garb no longer worn,
And the grasses thick and high
On my nurse's grave have grown;
Yet when winter comes each year,
And the leaves lie sere and brown,
While from skies gloom-draped and drear
Flakes of snow come floating down,

As I watch them whirl about,
Those old words I oft recall—
"Chile dey's sweepin heaben out
When you see dem snowflakes fall."

## THE REASON.

WHY does the world avoid that one
With cold averted eye?
What has he done that people shun
And pass him coolly by?

Has he some loathsome, foul disease
From whose contagious clutch
Each one in mortal terror flees,
As from a leper's touch?

Or has dishonor's blackened hand
Estranged him from his race,
And fixed on him guilt's shameful brand
That time can ne'er efface?

Has he done murder? Does he wear
The awful badge of Cain,
That he is forced by men to bear
The burden of disdain?

Nay, friend, e'en malice could not trace
Upon his stainless name
A single mark of black disgrace,
Or one dark spot of shame.

He is not shunned when he is seen
For aught of word or deed;
In sooth, the world deems him unclean
Because he is in need.

# CROMWELL.

LONG years have passed since noble Cromwell died,
But still undimmed his mighty footsteps stand
So deeply graven on old England's strand
That powerless is Time's effacing tide
To wash them out, or their impressions hide.
Fame counts him deathless—he whose iron hand
Put gyves on kingly might—whose fingers grand
Shaped Freedom from the clay of kingly pride.

His name defies the ruthless rust of age,
And England's unborn millions yet shall read
How from the metal of a people's rage
He wrought the sword that saved her in her need;
And with a tyrant's blood inscribed on History's page
The deathless story of his fateful deed.

## LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY.

IT is over and fled—the vision I cherished;
The flame was too fierce for its burning to last;
The rose of my love lost its perfume and perished;
I gave the dead bloom to the arms of the past.

Should I weep that the passionate madness has vanished—
That the colors have died in the beautiful dream?
Should I weep that out of life's sky has been banished
The star that was dearest and brightest of beam?

Should I weep that the honied red lips that I tasted
Respond to my passionate kisses no more—
That the ruby red wine in Love's chalice was wasted
And the fruit that invited was dust at the core?

Should I weep that a string in Love's harp has been broken—
That discord has crept in the ravishing strain,

And its tones as they reach me bring only the token
Of a dream I have lost and can never regain?

Nay, weep not in sorrow—in vain were regretting
The dreams and the loves that have withered and fled;
New loves will arise, the dear old ones forgetting—
New passions will burn when the old one is dead.

The flowers that bloom in their summer-time graces,
Though they wither and die in the mid-winter gloom,
Will awaken once more in a new spring's embraces,
In fragrance as sweet, and as gorgeous of bloom.

# THE SPRING POET.

THERE was a bard who once in glorious fashion
Was borne so high on Fancy's soaring wings,
He seized his lyre in ecstacy of passion
And woke the music sleeping on its strings.

He sang of Love whose fierce and ardent burning
The waves of all the oceans could not slake;
Of lovers who in deep despairing yearning
Had fought and died for some fair lady's sake.

He sang of Hate with wild eyes fierce and glaring;
With vengeance dwelling in a blackened heart;
Whose hands with wrath, so bitter and unsparing,
Wield bloody knife and sword and deadly dart.

He sang of War and fierce and bloody battle
Of squadrons clashing on the sanguine plain,

Of cannons' roar and muskets' deadly rattle,
Of gory fields and ghastly piles of slain.

He sang of Peace who with her soothing lotion
Healed all the wounds that cruel War had made,
Who calmed the conflict's fierce and wild commotion,
Dispersed the hosts in deadly strife arrayed.

He sang of skies in glowing splendor shining,
Of daisies sprinkled o'er the verdant fields;
Of crimson roses in the gardens twining;
Of all the joys that blushing nature yields.

He sang of bee and merry chirping cricket,
Of every gladsome creature on the wing;
Of birds that flit in every brake and thicket,
And cause the woods with music sweet to ring.

Until at last his passion slowly spending,
He sought about for other themes to sing;
Then heart and soul in one grand effort blending,
He softly sang a gentle ode to spring.

And then his lyre grown weary of abuses,
Would brook no more the stale themes he awoke;
A deaf ear turned to all his vain excuses,
Gave one low, sickly, gasping groan and broke.

## FRIENDS.

AS you travel life's hard journey, you will find if you are wise,
That wealth attracts a host of friends, as honey draws the flies;
And they will buzz about you, and round you cluster while
You hold the horn of plenty and you bask in fortune's smile.
But let misfortune's cruel hand some dark disastrous day
Depose you from wealth's sunny heights, your riches snatch away;
Let troubles flock about you, like the vultures to their feast,
The selfish world will pass you by; its friendship will have ceased.
The rats desert the corn crib when they've eaten all the corn,
And not a fly goes near a pot whose honey is all gone;

Thus when life's skies get clouded, and misfortune's rain descends,
And the pocketbook gets empty there's a falling off of friends.

## A TRUTH.

AS the uncouth oyster, that lies beneath the deep,
Within its rough and homely shell a precious pearl may keep—
As gems of priceless value and veins of richest gold
May lie beneath the surface of a naked, bloomless mold—
So God oft gives a heart with the noblest traits endowed
To one to whom He hath no outward grace allowed.

# KINDNESS.

A LITTLE deed of kindness shown
To some dark life so sad and lone,
May seem a thing of little worth,
And unregarded be on earth—
A flower cast aside to die,
Forgotten ere a day goes by.
But seen by angels' watchful eyes,
Beyond the clouds where Heaven lies;
And treasured in those realms on high—
God's fadeless palace of the sky,
That deed a living sparkling gem,
Shall stud the glorious diadem
The Savior's loving hands prepare
In Paradise for you to wear.

## THE BEST FRIEND.

WE trudge life's stony pathway, but before
our journey ends
We'll have, ah me, so many and such different
kinds of friends.
How many will be faithful till our fortunes go
amiss,
And then prove false like Judas, and betray us
with a kiss.
We weep the sad defection of the faithless ones
we trust,
And sink like regal Caesar 'neath the traitor's
dagger thrust.
But though the steel of Brutus lurks behind full
many a smile,
I do not rail at friendship nor accuse all friends
of guile;
For some, the true, the faithful will be loyal to
the end
Through all the cruel changes the fickle years
may send;

Yet, I have learned this lesson as I scale life's
rugged mount,
The friend that proves the truest is a good-sized
bank account.

## MAMMON.

OLD Mammon is the idol
To which men bend the knee
Through all the years from youth to age
Until they cease to be.
Before his sordid altar
The prince, the sage, the clown,
The tradesman, and the nobleman
In reverence bow down.

No god could be more jealous
Than this base one of gold,
Whose tabernacle seems to keep
The world within its fold.
The ledger is his Bible,
His temples—busy marts,
Where men to feed the hungry purse,
Cheat sleep and rob their hearts.

And his two mighty high-priests
Are Avarice and Greed,
Whose doctrines teach the multitudes
No other god to heed.

Men starve the kind emotions
To meet his hard demands,
While Honor often soils her robes
Obeying his commands.

No heresy or schism
His mighty ranks invade,
And all the tenets of his creed
Have ever been obeyed.
And all the passing ages
Add millions to the train
Of those who ceaseless homage pay
To this great god of gain.

## TO A WEEPING WILLOW.

MUST thou the guise of sorrow wear
While all the woods with laughter ring;
While gladness fills the summer air,
And violets o'er the meadows spring?

While brooks their mirthful stories tell,
And zephyrs waft their soft replies,
While flowers bloom in every dell,
And sunshine laughs in cloudless skies;

While every glade is filled with glee,
And sylvan joy is everywhere,
Must thou, O pensive, drooping tree
Thy silent sadness still declare?

Like one who mid a festive throng
Is sad while all the rest are gay,
Who joins not in the banquet song,
And scorns the revel's bright display;

Who views with cold, indifferent glance
The merry dancers floating by,

And has no partner in the dance,
  But mingles with the mirth a sigh.

Can nothing turn thee from thy woe
  Or bring thee respite from thy grief?
Can all the joys the skies bestow
  No solace bring thee or relief?

## KIND WORDS.

LET your words be kind and gentle,
Often has a heart been stung
By an unkind answer falling
From a hasty, heedless tongue.

As the rain from skies descending
Cheers the parched and thirsty plain,
Kind words soothe the life that's bending
Underneath a weight of pain.

As the oil on troubled waters
Calms the billows in their race,
Kind words often smooth the frowning
From an angry, sullen face.

As the sunbeam, mists dispelling,
Gladdens with its gleaming ray,
Kind words often lift the shadows
From despairing hearts away.

## CROMWELL.

CROMWELL held the scales of Justice and
he in that balance weighed
The prerogatives of rulers with a bleeding nation's woes,
And his sword smote for the people, and his great arm was not stayed
Till he freed them from a tyrant, and had humbled Britain's foes.

In the flames of revolution he did plunge the kingly pride,
When oppression's tide was running at its darkest, highest flood,
And he held it in war's furnace till it came forth purified,
Though he had to stain the scaffold with a mighty monarch's blood.

From the iron of his nature he did make the steadfast stays,
Whose strength upheld the fabric of his country's sinking fame,

When her crippled valor staggered in proud
Europe's scornful gaze,
When the hand that held the scepter, not the
nation, was to blame.

It was he who raised her prestige upon victory's
shining stairs
Till he placed it where it now is in its proud and
lofty seat,
And he gave it half the luster that it now so
proudly wears,
When he changed the French king's triumph
into ruin and defeat.

Not a monument is raised him, but his great deeds
have a tongue
That is calling, ever calling o'er the chasm of
the years,
Telling England, in the dark days when her
mighty arm was young,
How he battled for her liberties and banished all
her fears.

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